

REMARKS

Claims 1-23 and 25-30 are pending in the Application. Claims 1-3, 5-11, 17, and 19-20 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Eichman. Claims 4, 12-17, 18, 21-23, and 25-30 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Claims 1, 21 and 26 have been amended, and claim 5 has been cancelled.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the claims, as amended. Independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations "a second detergent cup having a bottom wall; a water inlet above the bottom wall to flush detergent from the first and second cups with water". The Examiner cites the Eichman patent as disclosing a siphoning system. Eichman discloses a siphoning system that positions a water inlet much differently than the Applicant's invention. Eichman uses the siphoning system for both filling the detergent reservoir 140 to dilute the detergent and for emptying the reservoir portion 140 using a siphoning effect to drain out through channel 108 (see Figures 12 and 14, column 5, lines 29-68 and column 6, lines 1-59). Eichman discloses that this configuration is necessary because powdered detergent delivery is enhanced by dispensing liquid beneath the pile of detergent (column 5, lines 42-44). In stark contrast, the Applicant's invention utilizes "a water inlet above the bottom wall of the second detergent cup to flush detergent from the first and second cups with water". Accordingly, based upon this Amendment which structurally clarifies the distinction between the Applicant's invention and the Eichman patent, the rejections based on Eichman should be withdrawn. As claims 2-4, 6-20 depend from claim 1, the rejections based on 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103 should be withdrawn as well.

Independent claim 21 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Eichman in view of either Kretchman et al., Caron, or Denisar. Claim 21 has been amended

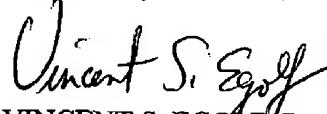
to include the limitations "a siphon in liquid detergent cup; a water inlet independent of the siphon and in communication with the siphon to flush detergent from the first and second cups with water". This distinguishes over Eichman which has a common water inlet and siphon which are not separate or independent of one another, as required by claim 21. As seen in Eichman, Figure 12, water enters through inlet tube 52 travels through passage 58 directed upward by scoop 142 to pass into the siphon's vertical chamber 152 where it flows over the top wall 154 of the siphon. Thus, the water inlet and siphon are not separate or independent from one another. Neither Kretchman, Caron, nor Denisar disclose a separate siphoning system and water inlet as required by claim 21. Accordingly, claim 21 and the claims depending therefrom, are in proper form for allowance.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests that a Notice of Allowance be issued.

No fees or extensions of time are believed to be due in connection with this amendment; however, consider this a request for any extension inadvertently omitted, and charge any additional fees to Deposit Account No. 26-0084.

Reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



VINCENT S. EGOLF, Reg. No. 51,131
McKEE, VOORHEES & SEASE, P.L.C.
801 Grand Avenue, Suite 3200
Des Moines, Iowa 50309-2721
Phone No: (515) 288-3667
Fax No: (515) 288-1338
CUSTOMER NO: 27139
Attorneys of Record

-pw/bja-